

### **TAKONA TATU**

Ana Maria Arredondo;

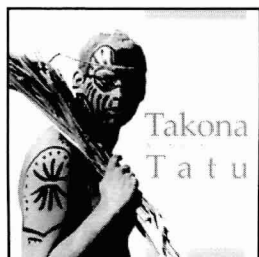
English translation by Pilar Pacheco C.

Rapa Nui Press, 2006

Soft cover; no ISBN

12,000 pesos / \$20.35

*Review by Tricia Allen*



I was pleasantly surprised at the breadth of this 240-page publication in that it is quite thorough in its coverage of *takona* (body painting) and tattooing in both early historic times and the present. In addition to numerous early illustrations, there are rare old photographs as well as beautiful images depicting contemporary body art.

Arredondo's book is a must for anyone interested in body adornment!

*Editor's note:* This book is also available in Spanish.

### **EASTER ISLAND. THE LOST FOREST**

Jean Hervé Daude

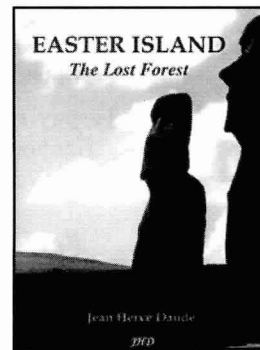
Privately published; printed in Canada, 2008

Soft cover; ISBN: 978-2-9810449-1-4

English and French editions available

9.00€ / \$11.38 (<http://delcampe.net/>)

*Review by Georgia Lee*



Daude's book, *Easter Island, The Lost Forest*, focuses on the idea that the *moai* were built in the belief that they would end the island's misfortunes caused by El Niño events (p.132) that the author claims were destroying the island's vegetation. Thus this book was written to "shed light" (the most overused term in grad school essays) on the island's past (p.35, 36).

Daude describes in detail the many El Niño events that hit coastal Peru and the Amazon. No problem there, but he then assumes that those same El Niño conditions also impacted Rapa Nui, which is "...located at the heart of the most affected area. It has extremely probably been subject to several of them in its history" (p.160).

However, as is clearly shown in two articles by oceanographer Ferren McIntyre, "We have found little climate connection between ENSO and Rapa Nui ... and we see a convincing lack of coupling between ENSO and global mean temperature". Moreover, "...the position of Rapa Nui at the center of the S.E. Pacific High appears to isolate it from the major sources of interannual climate variability" (McIntyre 2001:93).

Thus the author, and I assume there is only one, according to the title (despite the use of "the authors" twice on page 161), is fixated on the idea of El Niño events to explain all. Elaborating on this, on page 54, Daude states that, on Easter Island, the El Niño events of 1982-83 and 1997 are proof of the negative effects of hunger, lack of fish, frigid storms, etc. But hey! I was working in the field on Easter Island during those years. We had some rain in the Austral Winter but it always rains in the Winter. There was no shortage of fish. And frigid? Not bloody likely.

Although I don't wish to sound like a curmudgeon, this book contains numerous misspellings and bloopers ("...Frigil Southern Winds", p.88; "Heyerdalh", p.74); punctuation errors; the constant use of "Pascuense" (instead of Rapanui); a reliance on outdated source material (Chauvet's "goiters" and metabolic disorders to explain the iconography of kavakava figures; p.116-119); Rano Kau described as "small pond(s) at the bottom of the crater(s)..." (p.120).

The book is 171 pages long, with 25 illustrations, and bibliography.

### **THE TATTOOING ARTS OF TRIBAL WOMEN**

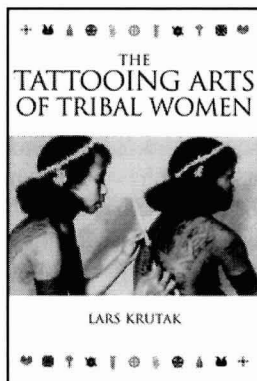
Lars Krutak

Bennett & Bloom, 2007

Soft cover;

ISBN 978-1-898948-75-9

\$45.99 (Amazon.com)



*Review by Tricia Allen*

Krutak, a PhD candidate at Arizona State University's School of Evolution & Social Change, examines the tattoo traditions of select cultures focusing on commonalities in both motif and societal function. His choice of Pacific Island cultures is curious — Papua New Guinea and Rapa Nui. In this chapter Krutak presents some interesting theories on the interpretation of certain shared motifs. Other culture areas included are North Africa, Iraq, the Balkans, Taiwan, Borneo, Japan, the Northwest Coast and Arctic, South America, California, and the American Southwest. Amongst the book's 288 pages, I particularly enjoyed Krutak's introduction — a wonderfully written essay on the role of women in traditional culture. Perhaps Krutak's greatest contribution is the abundance of beautiful photographs of tattoo, many credited to his personal collection.

*See also a list compiled by Tricia Allen about recent books published on the subject of tattooing — on page 87.*

## REFERENCES

- MacIntyre, Ferren. 2001. "Enso, Climate Variability, and the Rapanui, Part II. Oceanography and Rapa Nui". *Rapa Nui Journal* 15(2):83-94.
- MacIntyre, Ferren. 2001. "Enso, Climate and the Rapanui, Part 1. The Basics". *Rapa Nui Journal* 15(1): 17-26.

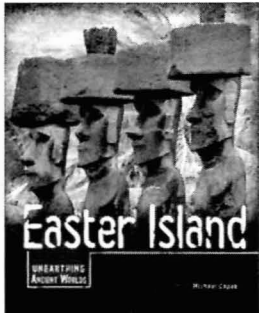
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## EASTER ISLAND. UNEARTHING ANCIENT WORLDS

Michael Capek

Twenty-First Century Books, 2009  
Hard cover (978-0822575832)  
\$25.03 (Amazon.com)

Review by Georgia Lee



Capek's children's book is illustrated with nice color photographs, slick paper, a classy eye-catching design together with large size fonts, all making it attractive to kids. As a children's book, the text is basic, if a tad sketchy. Page 9, for example: "Experts think that ... these people are of Polynesian descent". *Duh.*

The Introduction covers Roggeveen, the Spanish, Cook, a bit about the slave raids, and *rongorongo*. Chapter 1, "The Land of Stone Giants", describes Thomson's visit to the island; the next chapter, "Sleeping Giants", discusses the statues and the *ahu*. Chapter 3 is about Routledge and the *Mana* Expedition. "Senor Kon-tiki" is the subject of Chapter 4. Chapter 5, "The Moai Makers", covers Ferdon, Skjolsvold, Mulloy, and then Van Tilburg's *moai* project. There is an epilogue, a timeline, glossary, etc.

I am not sure what age bracket this book is intended for (it's part of a series called "Unearthing Ancient Worlds") — perhaps up to 7th grade. It has enough material to interest most youngsters and seems basic enough for them to understand a good bit about the island's past history.

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## ASTRONOMY AND LANDSCAPE IN EASTER ISLAND: NEW HINTS AT THE LIGHT OF THE THE ETHNOGRAPHICAL SOURCES

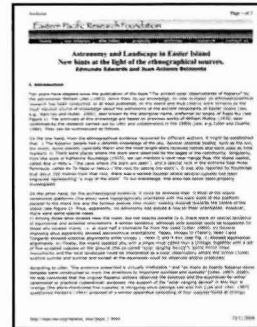
Edmundo Edwards & Juan Antonio Belmonte  
*Archaeoastronomy in Archaeology and Ethnography:  
Proceedings of the European Society  
for Astronomy in Culture\**

and

## MEGALITHIC ASTRONOMY OF EASTER ISLAND: A RE-ASSESSMENT

Edmundo Edwards & Juan Antonio Belmonte  
*Journal for the History of Astronomy: Archaeoastronomy\*\**

Review by William Liller



In these two articles, very similar both in content and purpose, the authors argue the case that the 15 or 20 astronomically-aligned *ahu* on Rapa Nui were more likely constructed to indicate directions to the rising and setting of the Pleiades (known as "Matariki" in most parts of Polynesia) and to the Belt of Orion ("Tautoru"), rather than towards the solstitial and equinoctial sunrises and sunsets as this writer and others have

suggested. In support of their argument, Edwards, who notes that he has spent much of his adult life carrying out investigations in the South Pacific, and Belmonte, a Spanish astrophysicist, point out that stars and star groups played an important part in the culture of the ancient Polynesians and in the important matters of navigation, but nowhere, they maintain, was there a "solar cult" such as existed in the early Americas and in many parts of ancient Europe and Asia.

The articles begin with a succinct summary of the astro-ethnography of the Rapanui, and the authors make note of the extensive knowledge the islanders had of the sky. Special attention is also given to both the several places where celestial bodies were observed and some supposed star maps. The authors then review briefly the archaeo-astronomical data with reference to the work of myself and others, including William Mulloy, who have

measured the azimuthal orientations of most of the island's *ahu*. Mulloy and Edwin Ferdon have noted that a few man-made indentations — "cupules" — found at or near special vantage points or by significant *ahu* might also be aligned with rising and setting solstices and equinoxes. These have been dubbed "sunstones" and "solar ranging device".

The remainders of the two papers are devoted to a wide-ranging discussion including a valuable and important pair of tables summarizing the Rapanui names for stars and asterisms, and explaining the lunar/stellar calendar, as gleaned from local informants. Edwards is perhaps uniquely qualified to pull together the reports of his informants and combine them with the published tabulations of others like Routledge, Metraux, Englert, Johnson, and Mahelona.

